

2004 – 2005 School Rule Development Committee (SRDC)
Working Agreement
(Approved by unanimous agreement, November 30, 2004)

Discussion Ground Rules—

1. One person speaks at a time; be recognized by facilitator before speaking.
2. Succinctly explain the reasoning behind your statements and questions.
3. Seek first to understand, then to be understood.
4. Stay focused on the task at hand; decide together before moving on.
5. Separate issues from personalities; keep the discussion civil.
6. Be aware that the use of some words, such as “no”, “but, and “however” may inhibit participation by others in the discussion.
7. Facilitator has authority and responsibility to limit comments for the sake of moving the discussion forward.

Decision Making—

8. For substantive decisions, the SRDC will work to share information and build consensus to the extent possible within the time allotted. “Consensus” is defined as everyone can either support the decision, or “live with” the decision, even if it’s not their first choice. If consensus is not achieved within the time allotted, decisions will be made by two-thirds majority composed of members favoring a proposal and members who agree to “live with” the proposal.
9. For procedural decisions, decisions will be made by a simple majority (50% + 1 vote).
10. Previous decisions will not be reopened for the benefit of a member (or alternate) who was not present when the matter was discussed and decided.
11. The SRDC may vote to delay a decision in order to allow members to consult with constituents. A vote to delay a decision would be a procedural vote.

Voting—

12. The SRDC will use color cards to indicate votes on both substantive and procedural votes. A green card indicates a “yes or strong support” vote, a yellow card indicates “moderate support” and a red card indicates “no or no support.” For substantive decisions, all votes would need to be either green or yellow to achieve consensus; two-thirds of votes of voting members present would need to be green or yellow for a two-thirds majority. For procedural votes to pass, a simple majority of votes of voting members present would need to be either green or yellow.

Membership and Attendance—

13. Regular attendance by either a primary or alternate member is vital to the positive outcome of the SRDC activity.
14. Alternates can participate in discussions but cannot vote if their primary representative is present.

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15. It is recommended that alternates attend every meeting in order to keep up-to-speed.
16. A quorum is defined as two-thirds of the SRDC membership. If a quorum is not present, discussion may continue, but no substantive votes will be taken.
17. Each primary and alternate member is responsible for reading materials before meetings and staying abreast of the SRDC's progress.
18. Continuity in representation is important for making progress. In the event that a constituency wishes to change its primary member, that change must be announced (via e-mail to all SRDC members) at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.
19. If you cannot attend a meeting, notify Nancy Bernard or Mark Soltman in advance.
20. Each primary and alternate member is solely responsible for ensuring communication back and forth with their constituents.
21. SRDC meetings are open, public meetings. Persons with interest in the development of recommendations for updated school environmental health and safety rules are encouraged to attend.

Meeting Records—

22. DOH will record notations made during meetings on flipcharts or on the projected computer record and decisions & recommendations developed by the committee. These general summary notes will be e-mailed to members and alternates following each meeting. Members are urged to take their own notes.
23. Any member may ask to have something recorded on a flipchart.

Technical Workgroups—

24. Technical Workgroups formed to support the work of the SRDC will operate under the SRDC Working Agreement
25. Formation of Technical Workgroups provides for including persons with technical expertise and experience to assist with clearly articulating the issues and formulating options in response to them.
26. To maximize the effectiveness of the Technical Workgroups, membership will represent the range of perspectives and points-of-view, include the appropriate technical expertise, and is limited in size (10 – 12 persons).
27. Technical Workgroup meetings are open, public meetings. Persons with interest in the topics addressed by the workgroups are encouraged to attend and participate in the discussions.